

REMARKS

The following is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action mailed on January 29, 2004. Claims 24-39 were examined. The Examiner rejected claims 24-27, 33-35, 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Mugino (U.S. Patent No. 6,343,088), claims 28-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of Mugino, claim 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of Mugino in combination with Ventrudo'259 (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,259), and claim 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of Mugino in combination with Ventrudo'119 (U.S. Patent No. 6,240,119),.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 103(a)

The Examiner based his §102(e) rejection of claims 24-27, 33-35, 38 and 39 and his §103(a) rejection of claims 28-32, 36, and 37 on Mugino, which has a §102(e) date of September 15, 1999. In the last response Applicants asserted priority to French patent application no. 99 05528, which was filed on April 30, 1999. In response, the Examiner cited 37 CFR §1.55 (a)(4), which requires an English translation with a certification statement to be filed in order to rely on a non-English priority document. Applicants include with this response an English translation of French patent application no. 99 05528 along with the required certification statement. For this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 24 and claims 25-39, dependent thereon, are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Based on the above remarks, Applicants believe that they have overcome all of the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action mailed January 26, 2005 and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenyon Y. Ripple
Registration No. 55,769
MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 1500
Houston, Texas 77056-6582
Telephone: (650) 330-2310
Facsimile: (650) 330-2314